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**Tropical Ecology and Society
Reconciling Conservation and
Sustainable Use of Biodiversity**

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**PROGRAM
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ABSTRACTS**

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O32-03 – S32 Europe's role in driving the future of tropical forested landscapes

Wednesday 22 June / 14:30-17:30 – Pasteur

Europe is ruling the new global wood-energy market: what potential impact on Central African forest sector ?

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Today, many European governments are setting up policies to promote wood energy as part of their plans to meet the EU ambitious target of 20% of energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020. In its various forms, from sticks to chips and pellets, wood accounts for about half of Europe's renewable-energy consumption. Analysts forecast that demand will increase at an annual rate near 5% until 2030. In 2014, Europe consumed 16m tonnes of wood pellets. On current trends, this demand will rise to 25m-30m a year by 2020. Europe does not produce enough timber to meet that extra demand. At the moment, EU is the largest wood energy market in developed countries and to supply its demand it is already importing huge quantities of fuelwood mainly from the USA, Canada and Russia.

But the major exporters (Canada and USA) could soon be interested in using pellets for their own electricity needs replacing coal and the source could quickly dry up. Apart from the Republic of South Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, still do not participate in this market. Yet the resources, particularly in Central Africa are significant. Central African countries have the potential to produce enough biomass that even after covering growing domestic energy demands, a net surplus of biofuel can be sustainably produced.

Loggers and African processors begin studying the possibility of producing and exporting pellets and charcoal to Europe. This new market has the potential to completely revolutionize the current market of timber, its geography and its logging standards. First, the prices of wood energy are constantly increasing, and some economists expect the world price of fuelwood and industrial roundwood to converge in 2030. Then the wood energy market is not very demanding on the quality of wood; all wood is good to burn: sawmill residues, forest wastes, declassified logs, and secondary species. Then the woodfuel market is not very demanding on production standards, although voluntary standards are emerging. And finally pellet is a product that allows to concentrate the energy and reduce transportation costs. It thus allows to make profitable remote production sites.

This presentation aims to give a brief overview over the trade in woodfuel at global scale and to highlight threats and opportunities for Central African forest sector that the increasing European demand may cause.

O32-04 – S32 Europe's role in driving the future of tropical forested landscapes

Wednesday 22 June / 14:30-17:30 – Pasteur

Reconciling Conservation and Development: The case of oil palm in Cameroon

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For many years, Europe intervenes in different ways to promote sustainability criteria for many agricultural and forestry products coming from developing countries. This European intervention is manifest at both ends of the trading chains:

i) In European countries through importation restrictions (bans, quotas, tariff barriers) of products which does not meet the required norms;

ii) In producing countries by supporting campaigns of environmental NGOs like WWF, ZSL, Greenpeace etc or through oriented bilateral or multilateral funding like KfW, GIZ, AFD, DFID, PROFOREST, TFT, TFA2020.

European interventions target various products considered as vital for the Cameroonian economy (timber, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, natural rubber). Even when the trading chains are not directly targeted, the conservation agenda of most environmental NGOs opposes the expansion of agro-industrial plantations at the expense of forests. As such, European interventionism is often considered as a way to impose conservation agenda of developed countries upon developing countries, without taking into account the legitimate aspiration for development of the South.

While sustainability is essential for the whole planet, the search for sustainability should not prevent development in the South.

Reconciling conservation and development should be the ultimate objective to reach by all parties in order to have a sustainable and equitable development. The example of the oil palm sector in Cameroon shows that such an objective is not an utopian view.